Poole Railway Communication. — A public meeting of the inhabitants of this town was held at the Antelope Hotel on the 19th inst., in accordance with a resolution passed at a meeting of the railway committee on the 10th inst. The chair was taken by the sheriff, Joseph Crabb, Esq. The following resolutions were carried unanimously:—That this meeting fully approves the proceedings of the railway committee in reference to the communications and interviews which have passed between it and the "Bristol and Exeter Railway Company," and consider that the line of railway now proposed to be made by the latter, namely, from near Bridgwater to Yeovil and Dorchester, in connection with the "Southampton and Dorsetshire Line," from Dorchester to Wareham and Poole, forms a communication of the Bristol and English Channels, deserving a co-operation and support of this town and neighbourhood. That the additional line proposed to be made by the "Great Western Railway Company," from Yeovil to Frome, and from thence to Bath or Chippenham, is to be viewed with much satisfaction, as establishing an important chain of communication between this county and the "Great Western Railway," which will prove highly beneficial both in a commercial and social point of view. The powers of the committee for carrying into effect the "Bristol and English Channels Junction Railway" having terminated, a committee was formed to see that the interests of this town are properly provided for in the approach from the "Southampton and Dorsetshire" line, and for the purpose of watching the general progress of the several undertakings. The thanks of the meeting were then given to J. Brown and M. K. Welch, Esqs., for their efficient services in promoting the interests of the town, and to the sheriff for his able conduct in the chair, after which the meeting was dissolved.

The South-Eastern Railway Company have offered to purchase the Greenwich Railway, or, as it is called, lease it for 999 years. They are to pay a rent of 36,000*l.* for the first year, and 10,000*l.* a year additional each succeeding year until it shall amount to 45,000*l.* Meetings of the proprietors of both railways have approved of the proposal; but the sanction of Parliament is required before it can be carried into effect. It is proposed that the lease should commence on the 1st January next. At the half-yearly meeting the directors announced that they had plans under consideration for extending their railway to nearly all the important places in Kent. A branch to Canterbury, Ramsgate, and Margate, will shortly be commenced; one to Maidstone is just completed; they intend to lease the Whitstable Railway. They propose lines from London through Woolwich, Gravesend, Rochester, Chatham, Sittingbourne, Faversham, and Chilham, to unite with the Canterbury branch; from Rochester to Maidstone; from the Ramsgate and Canterbury branch to Sandwich and Deal; and a branch from Tunbridge to Tunbridge Wells, and thence to Hastings.

Direct London and Portsmouth.—A meeting of the landowners and inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of Godalming was held on the 20th inst., for the purpose of having laid before them the merits of the projected direct line of railway between London and Portsmouth. Mr. Roker, the high constable was called to the chair. A deputation from the committee of direction, among whom were Mr. Wilkinson, the chairman of the company, Mr. Crowley, the deputy chairman, and Mr. Greig, attended the meeting with Mr. Kilgour, the solicitor Mr. J. Cubitt, the engineer and Mr. Samuda, one of the patentees of the atmospheric system; various resolutions in favour of the line were adopted.

South-Western Railway.—A report has prevailed that the South-Western Company intended to carry on a branch from Salisbury to this city (Exeter). We believe we have authority to state that the intention has been abandoned. Mr. Locke, the engineer, has been surveying the country west of Yeovil during the past week, with the view of extending the South-Western line to Exeter, but he found the difficulties of the country so great, that the directors will not this year attempt to carry their line further than Yeovil.—*Western Times.*

Railway in Connection with Exeter.—A plan is in progress, and will shortly be laid before the public, for a line of railway from Exeter to Barnstaple and North Devon. It will be formed on the western bank of the river, and connect itself with the terminating stations of the Bristol and Exeter and South Devon Railways. It will pass within a very short distance of the town of Crediton, where there will be a station, and the atmospheric principle will be adopted. There is now little doubt that Exeter will be reached on its eastern side by a liberally conducted railway, on which, likewise, the atmospheric power or traction will be used.—*Western Times.*

Cost of Railways.—The London and Blackwall Railway cost 326,670*l.* per mile, which is the highest cost of any railway in the kingdom. The Greenwich is next for expensiveness, and cost 264,736*l.* per mile. The three lines which were executed at the lowest cost per mile are the Arbroath and Forfar, the Aylesbury Junction, and the Hayle Railways, which severally cost 9,130*l.*, 8,710*l.*, and 6,949*l.* per mile. London and Birmingham cost 53,780*l.* per mile; the Great Western, 55,330*l.*; and the South Western, 27,750*l.* The Liverpool and Manchester cost 41,320*l.* per mile; the Manchester and Leeds, 59,800*l.*; and the London and Brighton, 64,370*l.*

The Prussian government, in order to obviate, in future, accidents on the railroads, has constituted at Berlin a school for the especial purpose of giving instruction in the art of conducting the locomotives. The number of pupils is fixed at 400. The annual payment to be made by each pupil is very moderate. The course of instruction is completed in one year.

One Thousand Miles an Hour by Railway! —M. Arago says the atmospheric pressure principle may be so applied as to insure safe transit at the rate of six leagues a minute, or 1,000 miles an hour.

Correspondence.

CRACK HOUSES.

SIR,—The answers to my letter, in your valuable journal of the 7th inst., are any thing but satisfactory. "Scrutator" says the party investing his capital in houses does so on *his own opinion*, and therefore he is justly punished. "A Looker-on" says they are valued by auctioneer's surveyors, and that the largest rental is the sole object of the purchaser; both therefore agree that the fault, or what you will, is shifted from their own shoulders to that of the unfortunate purchaser. Now, Sir, I must decidedly say that few if any cases can be named in which the speculator purchases on his own opinion. He who invests largely always employs some surveyor in whom he places confidence; the smaller speculator not being able to afford the expense of a surveyor, employs his neighbour, who is reputed to be a *respectable builder*. The majority of purchasers are retired or retiring tradesmen and citizens, who, desirous of sitting down for the remainder of their lives rent-free, and, with a life annuity, purchase a single tenement or small lot of houses, in one of which they take up their abode; it is therefore ridiculous to suppose that such men as these, from a "pig-headed" idea of their own infallibility, would thus make "ducks and drakes" of their money; and equally ridiculous to suppose that, while capitalists are desirous of making the most of their money, they can be indifferent to the finish and stability of the thing they purchase.

Admitting, with "A Looker-on," that auctioneers' surveyors are very great rogues, and some capitalists very avaricious, this has nothing to do with the fact stated, that "crack houses" are put up by speculating builders; it is neither a plea nor a justification for downright dishonesty. People do use the same precautions in purchasing houses as in purchasing goods, and the linen-drapers' devil's-dust has the same effect in the one instance as stuccoed-rubbish has on the other; both, as Lord Denman has it, are "*a delusion and a snare*" when employed for the purpose of deception.

In the neighbourhood of the Hampstead-road may now be seen on a large painted board, "This ground to be let for building on; *money* advanced if required." No comment is required on such a notice as this. A few doors off there is an instance of the working of this principle; a journeyman builder came forward, undertook the job, employed country labourers, boarded and lodged them while they were at work, and actually completed the thing on credit, much to the satisfaction of himself, provided he is lucky enough to pick up a flat to purchase it; if not it goes in acquittance of advances made to him. Another builds on his own responsibility, mortgages, and goes on building until he makes his fortune, or *gets into the Gazette*. The late M—— began by building, brick by brick, cottages, or rather dog-kennels, of 10*l.* rental, from the position of labourer rose to that of master, and died exceedingly wealthy. We object not to legitimate building or to legitimate speculation, but we do object to putting up houses which, like the Jew's razors, are made for sale, and not for use. Only fancy the fact, as fact it is, of some of the houses in Russell-square having a clause in the lease prohibiting dancing, and some of the houses in the streets near it, built scarcely thirty-five years ago, are of such doubtful composition, and indeed are now falling down, that it would have been wise to prohibit walking with shoes on in the upper rooms.

The sources of speculative building are evidently not confined to constructing houses for the poorer classes, nor can all the odium of building "crack houses" be confined to the smaller classes of builders, or to those who undertake the task being no builders at all. We trace those causes in the avarice of ground landlords, in the competition of brick-makers, in the credit system of timber merchants, in the neglect of duty of surveyors, in the necessities of the builder, and in the want of unanimity of the builders among themselves. The temptations being so great, why do not the builders incorporate themselves as a body, and by union produce strength of good resolution, protecting their own class-interest, and, at the same time, giving tone and character to the profession?

"Scrutator," who evidently seems touched on the *raw*, labours under a strange mistake in supposing that "W. T. B." has any objection to stucco, to beauty of finish, or ornament; admitting the use, he condemns the abuse of it for the purposes of deception, and often of downright fraud. Stucco and paint are admirable in place, but when used, as by nymphs of the *pave*, to hide a distempered frame, it awakens only feelings of disgust, instead of calling forth our admiration.

September 22, 1844. W. T. B.

SIR,—Having passed through Percy-street, Tottenham Court-road, this morning, my attention was attracted by the front of the house, No. 16, which has lately been, I presume, attempted to be coloured and drawn, or pointed, or something I know not what to call it. I shall feel obliged if you will call the attention of my brother readers to this; perhaps some of them can inform me of the name of this style of beautifying the fronts of houses, and who is the *Patentee*.

Islington, September 23. T. W. M.

TUBULAR AND OTHER CHIMNEY-FLUES CALLED "PATENT."

TO THE EDITOR OF THE BUILDER.

SIR,—In reference to an advertisement in your last number, my flues are not at "Ebury Wharf," and consequently are denounced as "spurious imitations," against which "the public is cautioned." (!) I have manufactured the tubular flues for chimneys, for heating churches, green-houses, and the like, for *more than twenty years*, yet that advertisement calls them "an entirely new construction of chimney." Any architect who has practised in the county of Stafford during that period can prove the truth of what I have asserted. It has been my habit to make the tubes with either plain or rebated joints, also pieces to form angles and curves, and all of *proper texture*. In 1835 (I think it was) I was entrusted with an order for rebated flues for the chimneys of King Edward's School at Birmingham (Charles Barry, Esq., architect, Mr. Cowlishaw, clerk-of-works), and it was executed satisfactorily. Where was the patent for these things at that time even, not to go further back? If I can prove my facts, as I undertake to do, together with a fact to place in juxta position, viz., that the first engineer